



## Transition Team

### For the Office of Child Protection

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Hon. Steve Cooley  
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February 25, 2015

TO: Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich, Mayor  
Supervisor Hilda L. Solis  
Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas  
Supervisor Sheila Kuehl  
Supervisor Don Knabe

FROM: Leslie Gilbert-Lurie, Co-Chair  
Mitchell H. Katz, Co-Chair

SUBJECT: **REPORT TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS FROM THE  
TRANSITION TEAM FOR THE OFFICE OF CHILD PROTECTION  
(MARCH 3, 2015 BOARD AGENDA)**

On June 10, 2014, the Board created the Transition Team for the Office of Child Protection (Transition Team) following adoption of the recommendations in the final report of the Blue Ribbon Commission on Child Protection (BRCCP) and requested that the Transition Team report each month on the status of implementing the recommendations.

As you are aware, the Transition Team is working to monitor and support the implementation of the final BRCCP recommendations. Attached is a written review of progress since the Transition Team last addressed you.

We look forward to updating your Board about the current status of the BRCCP recommendations and steps the Transition Team has taken.

LGL/MHK:pl

Attachment

c: Chief Executive Office  
County Counsel  
Executive Office, Board of Supervisors  
Children's Deputies

**REPORT TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS FROM  
THE TRANSITION TEAM FOR THE OFFICE OF CHILD PROTECTION**  
March 3, 2015 Board Agenda

Since its report to the Board on January 6, 2015, the Transition Team met twice, on January 12 and February 9, to continue monitoring the implementation of the Blue Ribbon Commission on Child Protection (BRCCP) recommendations. The team met with representatives of several County departments and with members of the community, and focused on recommendations related to health, mental health, education and foster home recruitment. The team received some encouraging reports – with acknowledgement that much remains to be addressed - of dedicated internal and cross-systems work.

The Transition Team was pleased to meet the Interim Director of the Office of Child Protection (OCP), who appears to be moving quickly to assemble a team and focus on what is needed for implementing the BRCCP recommendations.

**INCREASED COLLABORATION AND COMMUNICATION AMONG DEPARTMENTS:**

The Transition Team continues to hear reports from department leaders of increased cross-departmental collaboration: departments sharing information and working together to develop and refine approaches to meet children's needs for safety and well-being.

**OFFICE OF CHILD PROTECTION:**

The Transition Team has begun to meet with the Interim Director of the Office of Child Protection (OCP), who arrived officially on February 2, 2015. The Transition Team will discuss with the Interim Director in the coming weeks how it can best facilitate the work of her office. The Transition Team is committed to developing and maintaining close contact with the Office of Child Protection, sharing updates on the implementation of the BRCCP recommendations. The Team is optimistic that much will be accomplished in improving child protection services in the County, now that the Interim Director is in place.

**COUNTY-WIDE MISSION TO PRIORITIZE AND IMPROVE CHILD SAFETY:**

The Transition Team was requested to and will provide feedback on the draft of the Mission Statement as soon as the OCP Interim Director indicates the draft is ready for review.

**EDUCATION OF SCHOOL-AGED FOSTER YOUTH:**

In February 2015, the Transition Team focused on education advances and ensuring that school-aged foster youth benefit optimally from their education. LACOE, DCFS, LAUSD, Probation and community partners reported increasingly strong partnerships, and progress with data sharing and services to meet foster children's educational needs. These partnerships also facilitated work on critical issues such as credit recovery, assessment, and better interface with and between school districts whose data systems are not yet equipped for sharing.

Areas of continuing need include the lack of sufficient safe, supportive foster homes in neighborhoods of children's existing or home schools, stronger coordination for mental health support, responsible monitoring and reporting of students' psychotropic medication levels, and ensuring proper assessment of students' needs and abilities immediately upon arrival at a new school.

The Transition Team expects to hear from schools and providers on the related topic of early education for children ages 0 to 5 years at a future meeting.

School districts also have not yet adopted the Gloria Molina model (a recommendation of the BRCCP report) beyond existing areas. We heard testimony from LAUSD and from DCFS that expanding this model widely isn't feasible and efforts are best focused on areas where foster children are concentrated. Continued focus by the Transition Team, LACOE and Los Angeles school districts, and the Office of Child Protection is needed to determine how best to support foster children in school.

LACOE expects to have all 80 of the County's school districts able to share foster children's student information in real time by January, 2016.

#### **RECRUITMENT OF NON-RELATIVE FOSTER FAMILIES:**

The Transition Team heard several areas of need in the efforts to make available safe, supportive, needs-appropriate foster family homes for children who require placement. These include: critical need for child care (additional resources to cover the cost of child care would help the children and help recruit committed foster parents); need to support foster parents during and after the recruitment process; the challenge of having to meet both State and County requirements for approving foster homes.

Areas of progress: DCFS reported advances with the foster care search engine and involving foster youth in assessing and evaluating foster homes. The Transition Team received a report on 2/3/2015 that the assessment of foster care recruitment recommended by the BRCCP is under way, with findings anticipated to be completed by April 2015.

#### **MEDICAL HUB IMPROVEMENTS:**

Work is under way to move the Martin Luther King, Jr. HUB to a more child friendly space. One of the Transition Team co-chairs, Leslie Gilbert-Lurie, visited the LAC-USC and Martin Luther King, Jr. HUBs in January. She noted that while the Youth Welcome Center is a major improvement over youth staying in administrative offices overnight when there is no appropriate placement available, effort is needed to find meaningful activities for older teenage youth and Transition Age Youth who are left to spend long periods of time with minimal supervision.

**IMPROVING SAFETY - COMPREHENSIVE PREVENTION SYSTEM:**

The Transition Team co-convened meetings with First 5 L.A., Department of Public Health, others in the county and community already actively engaged in early intervention. The OCP Interim Director has begun to move forward with implementation, working with these key representatives to address the shared goal of correlating efforts toward prevention of abuse and neglect as a critical strategy to improve child safety across the county.

**IMPROVING SAFETY - RISK ASSESSMENT THROUGH PREDICTIVE ANALYTICS:**

Related to the child abuse and neglect prevention plan, the Transition Team expects to hear an update at an upcoming meeting on the implementation status of the BRCCP recommendation related to best practices using data analysis to address risk factors.

**MENTAL HEALTH:**

The Transition Team plans to work with the OCP to address issues related to implementation of BRCCP recommendations related to mental health issues for infants, children and youth, particularly in light of recent discussion of psychotropic medication being prescribed and/or administered to children and youth in the child protection and probation systems without sufficient oversight or approval. These issues also include ensuring adequate forms of mental health treatment for children and youth, mandating non-pharmacological interventions as best practice with children wherever feasible, and working with the Juvenile Court to fully implement and measure compliance with this mandate.